

Paul Works to Open Cuban Market to Texas Farmers

Washington, DC: Congressman Ron Paul is working with several congressional colleagues this week to end trade restrictions that hurt Texas farmers. While the House considers several large spending bills, including a bill that funds agricultural programs, Paul and others plan to use the amendment process to block the Cuban agricultural embargo. More than 270 members of the House voted in April to allow private financing for agricultural sales to Cuba by American banks, and Paul hopes that momentum from that vote will spill over into this week.

"Decades of agricultural trade sanctions have done nothing to topple the Castro regime, but they have hurt American farmers and the Cuban people," Paul stated. "Our farmers should not be denied access to markets because of a misguided and ineffective State department policy. Our current approach simply opens the door for farmers around the world to exploit the Cuban market. Rather than punishing our farmers with trade embargoes, Congress should be eliminating barriers and opening new markets like Cuba."

Paul notes that trade advisory groups estimate U.S. exports of food to Cuba could amount to \$400 million within five years. He introduced legislation last year that would allow free trade and travel with Cuba, while banning and federal aid or subsidies for the island nation.